(b) whether by signing and ratifying the UN convention, India will be reaffirming its commitment towards international policy framework in respect of persons with disabilities;

(c) whether according to the Census 2001, there are 2.19 crore persons (2.13 per cent of the total population) with disabilities in India; and

(d) to what extent this decision will help to improve the provision for rehabilitation of disabled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of India has signed the International Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities on 30th March, 2007. The rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities is a continuous and ongoing process and the provisions of the convention are being implemented by the Central Government Ministries, State Governments/ Union Territories.

Atrocities on dalits

4236. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether her Ministry is aware about the dalit suffering in Bibipur in Haryana;

(b) whether it is a fact that houses of dalits were torched in Salwan, Karnal in March, 2007; and

(c) whether it is also fact that a temple built by dalits was pulled down in village Bibipur but another constructed by non-dalits on public land was allowed to remain intact?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) As per the information received from the Government of Haryana, no Ravi Das Temple existed. Only an attempt was made to construct Ravi Das Temple on a piece of Panchayat land earmarked for School which was resisted by other communities. To avoid tension, the Administration intervened and demarcated shamlat/panchayat land and removed encroachments without any discrimination. However, a complaint regarding demolition/damaging of the idol of the temple,'an FIR No. 186 u/s 295A

I.P.C. was registered against unknown persons in the police station Indri on 23.08.2006. After investigation, the police made an untraced report.

No house of dalits has been reported to has been torched in Salwan in March, 2007.

Setting up of learning institutions for mentally challenged

4237. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under active consideration of Government to open learning institutions for the mentally challenged children and adults to bring about an improvement in their abilities and to ensure that they get proper care;

(b) if so, the details thereof and when it is expected to be opened and their locations; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) A number of Special Schools for the mentally challenged, run by voluntary agencies are being supported under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme. Further, a number of schools are run by State Governments. New schools are opened by NGOs/State Governments depending upon local requirements

Welfare scheme for SC, ST and weaker sections

4238. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans and programmes to uplift the conditions of SCs and STs and weaker sections of the society in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and